

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Stokes Assembly Hall
1039 Wilmington Pike, Westtown Township

February 6, 2013 - 7:30PM

Call to Order

Chairman Lees led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and called the meeting to order.

Introduction of New Planning Commission Member

Chairman Lees introduced Steven Rodia who was appointed to the Commission by the Board of Supervisors on January 22nd to replace Eric Rohrbach.

Present

Commissioners – Rodia, Whitig, Adler, Lees, Walter, and Hatton. Also present were Township Manager Robert Layman, one guest and those mentioned below.

Adoption of Agenda

The Agenda was adopted as presented (BW/DW).

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the Planning Commission meeting of January 9, 2013, were approved as submitted. (DW/BW). The meeting scheduled for January 23rd was canceled.

Reports

Jim Lees attended the January 22nd Board meeting. The Police again reported numerous thefts from unlocked cars and urged residents to prevent this by locking their vehicles. It was explained that the K-9 Unit was being disbanded because primary use of the unit was by outside organizations, the current K-9 officer is leaving the force, and the very expensive special K-9 vehicle needs to be replaced. There was also a Scout present to discuss the K-9 situation, among other things.

Dave Walter reported on the February 4th meeting. At the Work Session the Board discussed the Westtown School sewer situation, the status of the Rite Aid/PNC as a result of the Zoning Hearing Board decision, and the position of Township Engineer. At the regular meeting the Board approved the sludge removal contract, and a contract for a phosphorus removal unit at the sewer plant.

Announcements

None at this time.

Non-agenda Public Comment

Walter Pavelchek, 1050 S. New St., reported that the vehicle thefts had been the subject of an article in the local newspaper.

Tract 2012-3, Rite Aid/PNC

PC received copies of the application and Preliminary/Final Plan which was accepted by the Board of Supervisors on January 22, 2013. Present for the developer were Attorney Michael Gill and Engineer Rhett Ciliberti.

Mr. Gill briefly reviewed the plan and explained that the Zoning Hearing Board had granted most of the requested variances. Lighting remains an issue. PC asked about height of retaining wall, possible pedestrian connection to adjacent office complex, excess parking at the bank site, anticipated sewer usage, disposal of gas tanks and remediation of the site. Mr. Gill indicated that the bank would be built first.

PC expects consultants' reviews of this project for the meeting on February 20th.

Zoning Amendment – Alternative Energy

A revised draft of the amendment was sent to the PC members on February 1st. John Snook was present to discuss the new draft. PC received email from John Webster, resident who could not be present tonight.

Walter Pavelchek, S. New St., asked for clarification of the terms “principle use” and “accessory use”. John Snook explained the use of these terms in zoning ordinances and reviewed the reasoning for designating the various of alternative energy methods as either accessory or primary uses. There was also a discussion of the use of the word “primarily.”

As yet unresolved is whether solar would be permitted as a Principle Use in any zoning district other than the Township District. Possibilities might be the A/C or the MU districts if Westtown is required to provide for solar as a principle use. In that case it might be limited to tracts of a certain size located at a specified distance from a public road.

John Webster’s letter argues that the regulations related to “disrepair” and abandonment of geothermal systems are impractical and unnecessary as the systems pose no hazard. PC believes some regulation should be in place.

John Snook will prepare a draft of the amendment annotating the sections where some question remains. PC will forward this draft to the Township Solicitor for review and comment.

Public Comment

None at this time.

Adjournment (DW/BW) 8:59pm.

Elaine L. Adler
Planning Commission Secretary